Improve Use and Understanding of MTCS

Course objective

You will be able to:

- Describe the MTCS process

- Access MTCS transmission, proforma, and Ad Hoc reports

- Answer frequently asked MTCS questions

- Plan for upcoming improvements to MTCS

Training agenda

11:00 - 11:10	Welcome and Introduction
11:10 - 11:40	MTCS Overview
11:40 - 1:00	MTCS Fundamentals
1:00 - 2:00	Break
2:00 - 3:30	Frequently Asked MTCS Questions
3:30 - 4:30	Upcoming MTCS Initiatives

We include a 15 minute question and answer session before we conclude the "MTCS Fundamentals", "Frequently Asked MTCS Questions" and the "Upcoming MTCS Initiatives" sessions.

Note the training times are for Eastern Standard Time (EST).
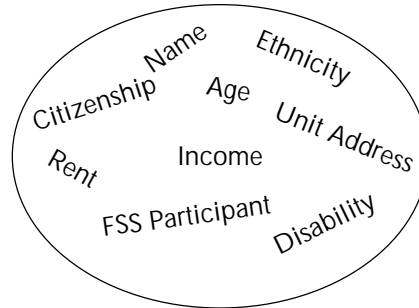
MTCS Overview

MTCS overview

You will be able to:

- Describe the MTCS process

- Explain MTCS reporting requirements

- Understand recent changes and improvements to MTCS

MTCS

Multifamily Tenant Characteristics System

Name   Ethnicity
Citizenship   Age   Unit Address
Rent   Income
FSS Participant   Disability

Collects and stores data about families who participate in public housing, Indian housing, and Section 8 programs

The MTCS database collects demographic and income information on people who participate in public housing, Indian housing, and Section 8 certificates, vouchers, and moderate rehabilitation programs. The Office of Public and Indian Housing (PIH) manages MTCS.

As of October 1997, PIH does not require Indian housing agencies to submit Form HUD-50058 data for families in Indian housing programs.

MTCS is a useful tool for PHAs

MTCS helps public housing agencies:

- Monitor and assess performance

- Plan and administer programs

- Respond to community requests for information

- Prevent fraud and abuse

Monitor and assess performance

Use MTCS reports to assess program implementation. MTCS also allows you to compare your public housing agency (PHA) to other PHAs at a national, state, metropolitan statistical area (MSA), or county level.

Plan and administer programs

Use MTCS to organize workloads, priorities, and identify management issues. MTCS reports also provide data for strategic planning purposes. MTCS reports can help you plan for income targeting and deconcentration as required by the Public Housing Reform Law.

Respond to community requests for information

Use MTCS to help you respond to requests for information about subsidized rental housing programs from your community. MTCS reports can help you share valuable information about your programs with local public officials, PHA partners, and community groups.

Prevent fraud and abuse

MTCS data makes income matching with other agencies feasible. HUD verifies Social Security (SS) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) through the Tenant Assistance Sub-System (TASS), formerly known as the Tenant Eligibility Verification System (TEVS).

MTCS is a useful tool for HUD

MTCS helps HUD:

- Monitor and assess PHA performance

- Plan and administer programs

- Support public information

- Analyze legislation and policy

- Prevent fraud and abuse

- Support fair housing reviews

Monitor and assess PHA performance

HUD Headquarters, Field Offices, and Troubled Agency Recovery Centers (TARCs) use MTCS reports to monitor PHAs enforcement of program rules and PHA reporting rates. MTCS reports also help HUD verify that PHAs conduct annual reexaminations and Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections.

Plan and administer programs

MTCS helps HUD monitor compliance with PIH Notices and regulatory requirements. MTCS also provides HUD with documentation for budget reviews and funding decisions.

Support public information

HUD uses MTCS to respond to requests for information about subsidized rental housing programs from Congressional offices, federal agencies, research organizations, local officials, and the general public. To support these requests, HUD now offers the general public Resident Characteristics report to interested parties via the Internet.
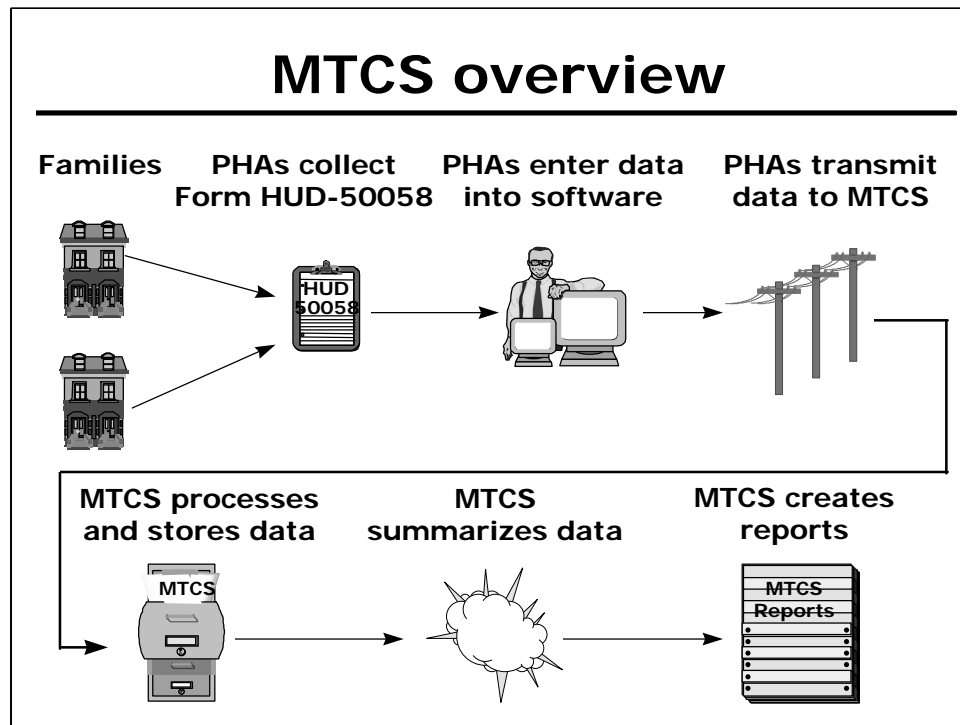
Analyze legislation and policy

MTCS data helps HUD to estimate the potential impact of legislative, policy, and procedural changes. Increasingly, HUD references MTCS data when it makes funding decisions.

Prevent fraud, corruption and abuse

HUD uses MTCS to verify public housing and Section 8 participants income through TASS. Accurate and timely reporting also helped MTCS earn a clean audit from HUD's Inspector General.

Support fair housing reviews

MTCS reports help HUD review PHA activities from a fair housing perspective. MTCS reports include information on family composition and disability needs.

MTCS overview

Families **PHAs collect Form HUD-50058** **PHAs enter data into software** **PHAs transmit data to MTCS**

MTCS processes and stores data **MTCS summarizes data** **MTCS creates reports**

To report accurate and timely data to MTCS, it is important to know the MTCS process:

PHAs collect Form HUD-50058 data for each family who receives assistance under the public housing and Section 8 certificates, vouchers, and moderate rehabilitation programs.

PHAs enter data into software to enable electronic submission of Form HUD-50058 data to HUD.

PHAs transmit data to MTCS via the Internet or SprintMail.

MTCS processes and stores data in the database. MTCS validates each record to ensure correct format and field entries. MTCS transmits error notifications to the PHAs to document the fatal and warning errors it found. MTCS loads valid Form HUD-50058 data into the database.

MTCS summarizes household data in the database. MTCS summarizes data on a regular schedule to produce Ad Hoc and proforma reports.

MTCS creates reports for HUD and PHAs. HUD and PHAs access MTCS reports on the Internet.

PHAs collect Form HUD-50058

- Collect tenant data

- Submit data for all actions
  - PHAs with 100 units or more, submit once a month
  - PHAs with less than 100 units, submit once a quarter

- Submit minimum 85 percent for public housing and Section 8 certificates and vouchers

HUD requires PHAs to submit data for all actions:

- New Admission
- Annual Reexamination
- Interim Reexamination
- Portability Move-in
- Portability Move-out
- End of Participation
- Other Change of Unit
- FSS Enrollment or Exit Only

As of January 28, 1999, HUD requires PHAs to submit a minimum of 85 percent for public housing and a minimum of 85 percent for combined Section 8 certificates and vouchers. PHAs who do not meet the minimum 85 percent and who do not receive forbearance are subject to sanctions by HUD.

Use the correct version of Form HUD-50058. MTCS only currently accepts the 7/98 version. Beginning October 1, 1999, MTCS will only accept the 10/1999 version of the Form.

PHAs enter data into software

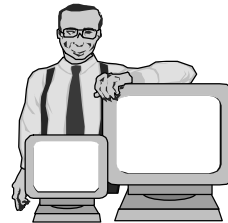- FRS 2.0

- Vendor software

- PHA developed software
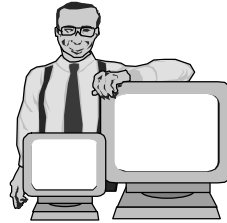
In June 1995, HUD mandated all PHAs transmit data to HUD electronically. PHAs use software to collect and store Form HUD-50058. PHA software packages data for electronic transmission to HUD.

PHAs can use the Family Reporting Software (FRS) 2.0, vendor software, or PHA developed software. All software collects, stores, and updates Form HUD-50058 data; it is also used to transmit data electronically to MTCS via either the Internet or SprintMail. Even though all software options share these capabilities, specific features and levels of support will vary.

PHAs enter data into software

- FRS 2.0

- Vendor software

- PHA developed software

FRS 2.0 is a free software program available to all PHAs through the Internet or by request to HUD. In addition to its data collection and transmission capabilities, FRS 2.0 converts old tenant data from previous versions of FRS. FRS 2.0 also allows you to edit data and receive error reports.

There are several benefits for PHAs that use FRS 2.0. It is a free software program that is Year 2000 compliant and HUD-tested. FRS 2.0 allows one PHA to transmit for another and the MTCS Hotline can support user questions and problems. FRS 2.0 also enforces all fatal and warning errors. However, FRS 2.0 cannot be networked so multiple users cannot access and enter data at the same time. It also is probably not the best option for large PHAs who have large amounts of data to collect.

Interested FRS 2.0 users can download the software either from the MTCS web site or request a disk copy of the program. The address for the MTCS web site is:

http://www.hud.gov/pih/systems/mtcs/pihmtcs.html

For installation instructions, download the FRS 2.0 User Guide from the MTCS documentation web page:

http://www.hud.gov/pih/systems/mtcs/document.html

To order a disk copy and FRS 2.0 User Guide from HUD User*, a PHA should call:

1-800-245-2691

*There is a nominal $30 charge to cover the cost of disks, Guide, and mailing.

PHAs enter data into software

- FRS 2.0

- Vendor software

- PHA developed software

Vendor and PHA developed software can have essentially the same capabilities. Vendor software is typically an off-the-shelf or custom software package that PHAs purchase from a vendor to process Form HUD-50058 data. Vendors can customize software to suit specific PHA business needs but the software must conform to MTCS requirements in order for PHAs to submit data to HUD. Vendor software is often sold as a comprehensive package and in modules so the PHA can choose the functionality it needs.

One of the biggest benefits of vendor software is its ability to integrate Form HUD-50058 data into other PHA information systems. Often PHAs use the same software to process new Section 8 admissions, for example, and to issue subsidy checks to Section 8 landlords. This integration offers PHAs greater efficiencies in day-to-day operations and supports multiple PHA business processes.

PHAs may find vendor software packages expensive and a significant investment. A vendor may provide very different levels of support to a PHA. Some vendors provide free, comprehensive, high-quality support while others offer different types of support at different costs. PHAs may need to negotiate with their vendors to ensure the software meets their needs.

PHAs can also develop their own custom software to meet their unique business needs if they have the technical and financial capacity to do so. The Technical Reference Guide contains the required software specifications and flat file layout. The Technical Reference Guide is available at the MTCS documentation web page at:

www.hud.gov/pih/systems/mtcs/document.html

PHAs enter data into software

- Contains 10 records

- Transmits only records
  that apply to each family
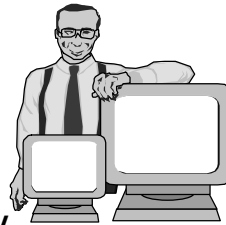
To transmit data to MTCS, software organizes the electronic Form HUD-50058 differently than the paper Form HUD-50058. The electronic Form HUD-50058 consists of 10 records:

- **Basic** - Head of household social security number, family subsidy status, unit, total assets, and the total tenant payment data. The basic record is the only required record for a transmission.
- **Family** - Family composition data
- **Income** - Family's income data, if the family has any income
- **Public housing** - Public housing family's rent and utilities data
- **Indian mutual help** - Indian mutual help family's rent and utilities data
- **Section 8 certificate** - Section 8 certificate family's rent and utilities data
- **Section 8 voucher** - Section 8 voucher family's rent and utilities data
- **Moderate rehabilitation** - Moderate rehabilitation family's rent and utilities data
- **Manufactured homeowner** - Family's rent and utilities data for a family that receives assistance through the Section 8 certificate or voucher program and owns a manufactured home
- **FSS** - FSS program participation data, if a family is enrolled in the FSS program

These records describe how software packages Form HUD-50058 data. Note that these records are organized differently than the paper Form HUD-50058 data. These electronic records do not match the sections of the paper Form HUD-50058 but both the paper and electronic versions capture the same information.

Each electronic Form HUD-50058 only contains the records applicable to a particular family and a PHA does not transmit all 10 records for every family.

PHAs transmit data to MTCS

- Internet

- SprintMail
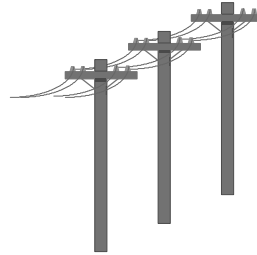
In 1997, HUD implemented the capability to receive Form HUD-50058 data over the **Internet**. You can use the Internet to transmit data and receive error reports from MTCS. PHAs can find more information about the software it needs to use to transmit via the Internet in the Data Transmission Guide available at:

http://www.hud.gov/pih/systems/mtcs/document.html

To access the Internet, you must establish a connection to the web with a local or national Internet service provider (ISP). ISPs typically have different Internet plans from which to choose. PHAs that choose this option participate in cutting-edge information sharing and distribution that reflects a general trend toward Internet-based business processes.

Internet transmission is more flexible than SprintMail. It is capable of processing large files and does not require you to break down information into smaller packages.

PHAs that transmit data via the Internet can determine immediately if MTCS received the data through MTCS return receipt.

To send data to MTCS via the Internet, you must first login to MTCS. To login to MTCS you need a MTCS user ID and password. PHAs should contact the MTCS Hotline at 1-800-FON-MTCS to obtain MTCS user IDs and passwords. HUD staff should contact Tom Williams at HUD Headquarters.

PHAs transmit data to MTCS

- Internet
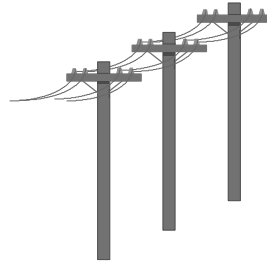
- SprintMail

SprintMail is a DOS-based program that allows PHAs or their servicing agent to transmit Form HUD-50058 data to MTCS. HUD does not support the Windows version of PC SprintMail.

SprintMail imbeds the Form HUD-50058 data into the body of a text message and transmits that message across the Sprint network to MTCS.

If you want to use SprintMail, you can install and configure the disks onto your local computer system. You must check your SprintMail mailbox to retrieve error notifications.

SprintMail cannot deliver a file larger than 2MB. Break down the file into smaller segments before transmission. HUD recommends you transmit 250-300 Forms at one time.

MTCS processes and stores data

When MTCS receives data, it runs an edit and validation program to verify compliance with:

- Business rules
- Format specifications
- IBS and HUDCAPS data

MTCS processes the transmitted data via an edit and validation program that contains business rules, format specifications, and Integrated Business System (IBS) and HUDCAPS data.

Business rules specify acceptable and unacceptable data. MTCS verifies whether the data entered in a field is appropriate for that field. Business rules reflect HUD program rules and ensure compliance.

Format specifications specify character-length and format for data entry. MTCS verifies whether the software formatted the data correctly in a field. Character-length and format dictate how many characters MTCS allows in each field and whether the characters are alphabetic, numeric, or both.

IBS and HUDCAPS data. MTCS validates public housing project numbers and Section 8 PHA/program codes against IBS and HUDCAPS data. IBS is the official database for public and Indian housing project and unit numbers. HUDCAPS is the official database for Section 8 PHA/program codes. HUDCAPS captures the number of active units for each Section 8 PHA/program code.

If MTCS rejects a project number or PHA/program code, PHAs should contact their Field Office to verify project numbers in IBS and contact their financial analyst to verify the PHA active units/program code in HUDCAPS.

MTCS processes and stores data

After it processes data, MTCS posts transmission information:

- Submission Status report

- Error report and error file

- Error Analysis report

For all transmissions, MTCS posts a **Submission Status report** to indicate the number of Forms accepted.

If your submission contains invalid data, MTCS posts error notifications on the Internet or sends them to your SprintMail mailbox.

Error report identifies all fatal errors in a transmission. Correct all fatal errors and retransmit the file to MTCS.

Error Analysis report is a statistical summary of all fatal and warning errors in a transmission.

If you transmit non-Form HUD-50058 data, you will receive a **Reject Error file**.

HUD and PHA staff can access all transmission information and all error notifications on the Internet via MTCS. The Submission Status report is **only** available via the Internet.

MTCS processes and stores data

- MTCS stores family data in the database

- MTCS does not store family data if it had **any** fatal errors

Once MTCS processes the data, MTCS stores family data that does not contain fatal errors in the database. MTCS does not store any data for families that had fatal errors.

If any of your families had fatal errors, as indicated on your error report, you must correct them and retransmit your data to MTCS. You do not need to retransmit your entire transmission, just the families which had fatal errors. When MTCS receives the file, MTCS processes the data and stores data without fatal errors in the database.

MTCS summarizes data

- Collects data through the last Friday of the month

- Purges stored data older than 18 months

- Stores data in summary form to generate MTCS reports
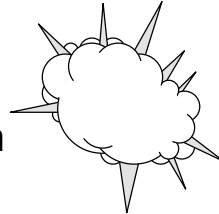
The process to generate the reports is called **summarization**. The summarization schedule stores and updates data on a regular schedule:

- Every Friday, MTCS stores data and updates information available for Ad Hoc reports

- On the last Friday of the month, MTCS stops accepting new data at noon (EST) for inclusion in the next month's reports. If you submit data after noon on the last Friday of the month, MTCS stores the data but it will not appear in next month's reports.

- On the last Friday of the month, MTCS purges data with an effective date of action older than 18 months

- On the first Friday of the month, MTCS summarizes data to generate proforma reports that you can access by the middle of next month

There is a one week period between the monthly data purge and when the summarization process begins. Ad Hoc reflects the data purge immediately while the MTCS summary reports reflect the purge by mid-month.

MTCS creates reports

- MTCS reports
  - Summary
  - Summary (Section 8)
  - Detailed

- Deconcentration

- Ad Hoc

MTCS Reports
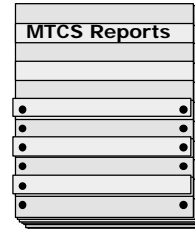
- **Summary reports** display aggregate family demographic and income data. The reports apply to public housing, Indian housing, and Section 8 programs.
  - Resident Characteristics
  - Key Management Indicators
  - New Admissions
  - Families Ending Participation
  - Over and Under Housed
  - Program Type
  - Changes in Income (3)
  - Citizenship
  - Income
  - FSS Enrollments
  - FSS Enrollee Progress
  - FSS Delinquencies
  - FSS Exits

- **Summary (Section 8) reports** apply only to Section 8 certificate and vouchers.
  - Rent and Rent Burden
  - Budget Related Averages
  - Special Housing Types
  - Mobility and Portability

- **Detailed reports** display individual tenant data that targets specific issues or analysis.
  - HA Delinquency
  - Eligibility and Admissions
  - List of New Admissions
  - Unit Assignments Discrepancy
  - Late Reexamination Discrepancy
  - Late HQS Inspection Discrepancy
  - Tenant Rent Calculation Discrepancy

- **Deconcentration reports** (available 9/30/1999) display only Section 8 certificate and voucher data. The *Section 8 Deconcentration Analysis Reports* provide information on Section 8 families with children according to the poverty rates and on assisted family concentrations in their census tracts. These new reports also track the number and extent of Section 8 owner participation.

- **Ad Hoc** allows users to query a subset of Form HUD-50058 data.

Notice PIH 99-2

- Requires PHAs to submit 100 percent of Form HUD-50058s

- Establishes an 85 percent minimum reporting rate

- Initiates semi-annual assessments

- Allows PHAs to request forbearance from sanctions

Effective January 28, 1999, HUD began to sanction PHAs who do not report a minimum of 85 percent of Form HUD-50058 data for both public housing and Section 8 certificate and vouchers programs. Section 8 moderate rehabilitation and Indian housing are not included in the PHA's reporting requirements.

HUD calculates public housing and Section 8 reporting rates separately. PHAs who meet the 85 percent reporting requirement for one program but not the other are still subject to sanctions. To prevent sanctions, PHAs must submit timely, accurate, and complete data to MTCS.

HUD initiates semi-annual assessments to determine if PHAs comply with Notice PIH 99-2 reporting requirements. Field Offices and TARCs examine PHA reporting rates in June and December of each year.

If PHAs do not meet the minimum 85 percent reporting rate, they can submit forbearance requests to their Field Office or TARC. Forbearances requests are due to the Field Office or TARC by February 15 and August 15 each year.

Notice PIH 99-2 process overview

Step 1
Step 2
Step 3

PHAs, Field Offices, and TARCs monitor reporting

Field Offices and TARCs conduct semi-annual assessments; PHAs submit forbearance requests

HUD reviews PHA operations and imposes sanctions, if necessary

PIH Notice 99-2 consists of three major steps:

Step 1 - PHAs, Field Offices, and TARCs monitor PHA reporting rates to ensure compliance with Notice PIH 99-2. Access the HA Delinquency Report to check your reporting rate.

Step 2 - Every January and July, **Field Offices and TARCs conduct semi-annual assessments** to determine if PHAs comply with the minimum 85 percent reporting requirement.

If you do not meet the 85 percent reporting requirement at the end of the semi-annual assessment period, you can request forbearance from sanctions from your Field Office. Forbearance requests are due to the Field Office or TARC by **February 15** and **August 15** each year. Forbearance requests must contain:
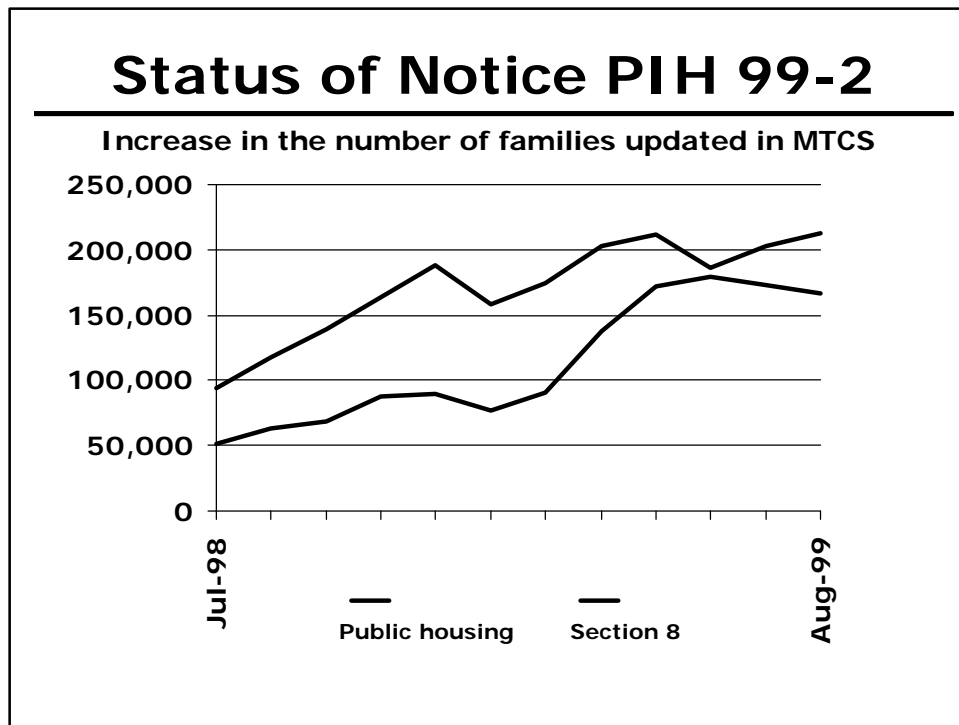
- A description of the reporting deficiency
- An explanation of problems encountered (e.g., backlogged data, SprintMail)
- Specific steps to improve performance and overcome problems
- Measurable monthly goals to reach 85 percent reporting by the next semi-annual assessment period

Step 3 - At the end of each reporting period, Field Offices and TARCs will review underreporting PHAs performance. If necessary, they will recommend sanctions for underreporting PHAs that did not receive forbearance and did not take remedial steps to correct reporting deficiencies.

To learn more about HUD's requirements, read the Notice PIH 99-2 Processing Guidelines available at **www.hud.gov/pih/systems/mtcs/notice/pih99-2.html.**

Status of Notice PIH 99-2

Increase in the number of families updated in MTCS

Public housing   Section 8

Jul-98   Aug-99

PHAs have greatly improved MTCS reporting. Between August 1998 and July 1999, the number of Section 8 Forms increased from 93,693 to 212,448. During the same period, the number of public housing Forms grew from 50,806 to 166,858. You can see that PHAs submitted large volumes of Form HUD-50058 data in the months before the first semi-annual assessment in June 1999.

PHAs are increasingly using the Internet to transmit data to MTCS. In August 1998, 367 PHAs used the Internet to transmit Form HUD-50058 information to MTCS. By July 1999, 1,699 PHAs relied on the Internet for MTCS data transmission.

What's new in MTCS?

May 1999 Enhancements

- Changes in Income reports

- General public Resident Characteristics report

- Additional transmission information

- Easier navigation and redesigned screens

MTCS released three new reports in May 1999.

Three new **Changes in Income** reports are available to track changes in income for:

- Families that receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and General Assistance
- Elderly families that receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Non-elderly families that receive SSI

The **Resident Characteristics report** is now available to the public directly from the MTCS homepage. The general public Resident Characteristics report provides four different levels of demographic and income data (national, state, PHA, and project) on residents in public housing, Indian housing and Section 8 programs.

Improved **transmission information** provides you with enhanced Submission Status, Error, and Error Analysis reports that help you identify when MTCS received your transmission and the number and type of errors it contained.

New graphics, links and screens improve the look of MTCS and presentation of data. Help screens are available that provide answers to frequently asked questions, definitions, and instructions on how to use MTCS. Since May 1999, MTCS also has new Login, Main Menu, and Transmission Information screens.

What's new in MTCS?

September 1999 Enhancements

● New Ad Hoc download options (2)

● Expanded Ad Hoc selection

To prevent download failures and improve MTCS performance, the new **next day Ad Hoc download option** in MTCS will allow you to run an Ad Hoc query and choose any number of fields for download in a zip format.

The new **immediate Ad Hoc download option with pre-selected fields** allows you to receive ten fields for download and not worry about which fields you need to select. This option is available for all PHAs and will replace the need to call the MTCS Hotline for the "Large HA report." The ten standard fields for this download option provide basic information about the families stored in MTCS:

- HA code	- Head of household first name
- Project number	- Head of household SSN
- Program type	- Total number in household
- Effective date of action	- Total annual income
- Head of household last name	- Total tenant payment

MTCS will **expand** the number of Form HUD-50058 fields you can use to query the database. You can query the database and include these new fields and summary (calculated) fields, noted in bold text. Summary fields require a next day download.

- Head of household date of birth	- Owner TIN/SSN
- Zip code before admission	- **Income quantity by source**
- Current zip code	- **Family type code**
- Date unit last passed inspection	- **Distribution of household members by age**
- Date unit last inspected	- **Distrib. of family members by disability status**
- Owner name	- **Unit address**

What's new in MTCS?

September 1999 Enhancements

- Deconcentration reports

- Random samples

- More report information on portability (Section 8 only)

To help PHAs assess patterns of poverty, MTCS will release two new **Deconcentration reports**. These reports identify areas where families receive Section 8 assistance. One report contains data for all Census tracts within the PHA and the second report provides data for a single Census tract. Single Census tract reports can provide data across multiple PHAs, if appropriate.

MTCS will provide you with a new Ad Hoc feature to generate **random tenant samples** from your PHA. Use the random tenant tool to develop samples for PHA surveys or conduct research. This new tool allows you to select different sample types from your PHA.

To generate a random sample, you must request more than 30 tenants for your sample size. You can narrow your sample by effective date. The sample provides you with tenants:

- Social Security numbers
- Names (Last, First, M.I.)
- Addresses including city, state, and zip code

Several MTCS **reports contain more information about portability**. On the HA Delinquency and Resident Characteristics reports, the reporting rate now reflects the number of units administered (includes portability move-ins and excludes portability move-outs). The Resident Characteristics report has information on portability and the number of Section 8 units the PHA administers. The Key Management Indicators report includes new fields to count the number of portability move-in and move-out records in the last 12 months